



Viking Ship Museum in Oslo, Norway

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NORWAY

Warriors and explorers

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With its majestic fjords, quiet rural villages and sophisticated capital, it can be difficult to connect today's Norway with its history of fierce seafaring warriors.

The Viking Ship Museum in Oslo can help; it hosts some of the best preserved Viking ships in existence.

The Norwegians are still explorers at heart. Oslo's Fram Museum houses the vessel used by early Norwegian explorers to the North and South Poles.

My favorite stop is the Norsk Folkemuseum, an open-air museum which brings Norway's traditions and culture to life. Historic homes, barns and a stave church have been carefully preserved here.

From Oslo, board the Bergen Railroad, which winds through the rich farmland of central Norway. Continue on the breathtaking Flåm Railway, a steep journey that winds past spectacular waterfalls and through dramatic mountain ranges. In the village of Flåm, board a boat for a cruise through the Sognefjord, one of the world's longest and deepest fjords.

After cruising the Sognefjord, it's just a short train ride to the port town of Bergen. The Bryggen District along the wharf dates back to 1360, when it was a center of the Hanseatic League. Today, its brightly colored wooden houses are listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. ▣